

May 6, 2014

MEMORANDUM

To: Christopher Williams, Superintendent, Seattle Parks & Recreation
From: Leschi Project Advisory Team (PAT)
Re: Recommendations for Leschi Moorages

The Leschi Marina Project Advisory Team (PAT) is pleased to present recommendations that will lead to safe, affordable and quality moorage facilities for recreational boaters and the public for generations to come.

The Leschi marinas are a unique and valuable public resource but dock conditions have deteriorated over many years with limited investments or repairs by the City. The current concession management model only provided for minor maintenance and failed to address ongoing asset replacement. Little has been done to ensure the facilities are safe and functional despite a consistent revenue stream provided by tenants.

Our PAT's goal has been to articulate an achievable and sustainable operating and maintenance model for the future of North and South Leschi marinas. In producing our recommendations we have studied operational practices at other marinas and market data; management of other City of Seattle Park facilities; identified current assets and needs; and taken into account extensive input provided by tenants and the surrounding community.

Our recommendations are based on ideas broadly supported by the full PAT. Other important ideas that merit acknowledgement and were discussed during our process, but that did not make it into the final recommendations include: factoring in the effect on global warming as a key part of the decision-making process going forward; placing sailboats at the north moorage and powerboats at the south moorage; and banning powerboats.

Much remains to be done to produce an actual moorage design and important milestones lay ahead including environmental permitting but our

recommendations will set the moorages on the path of greater functionality and financial sustainability. We applaud Seattle Parks and Recreation's commitment to stimulate meaningful public engagement and protect historic use of the marinas.

We wish to thank and recognize the leadership and support of Seattle Parks and Recreation's professional staff including Nathan Torgelson, Paula Hoff and Paul Wilkinson throughout this important process.

Thank you for the opportunity to help frame a vision for the future of Leschi marina!

Recommendations of the
Leschi Moorage Project Advisory Team (PAT)
April 2014

Context

- Leschi Moorage has 214 wet and 119 dry moorage slips created in the mid-20th Century.
- Seattle Parks and Recreation has started the permitting process for improvements to South Leschi and North Leschi, assuming minimal expansion of the pier footprint. Approximately 38 of the slips are currently not usable due to the poor conditions of the docks.
- Reid Middleton has been retained to help with the permitting and design process and Grette Associates for environmental planning (biological and fish habitat evaluation).
- Parks has submitted a JARPA (Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application) and a Biologic Evaluation and Essential Fish Habitat Evaluation to the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the State Department of Ecology (DOE). The Corps and DOE issued a notice on November 25, 2013. The comment period ended on December 25, 2013 and no comments were received.
- Tribes are informed of the project and will participate in the design process. Seattle Parks is required to come to an agreement with the Tribes.

Vision

The activities described above are positive but no long-term vision or direction currently exists for Leschi marina. We propose the following:

Leschi Marina provides safe, affordable and quality moorage for recreational boaters and public access to Lake Washington. In a city surrounded by water, it is a rare public resource, and must be professionally managed and financially sustainable in order to protect the environment and preserve enjoyment of Lake Washington for generations to come.

Operational Recommendations

Following are recommendations that will help make the vision become a reality.

1. **Update the marina with the end users in mind.**

- Leschi marina should remain an affordable resource for a diverse group of recreational users. We need to acknowledge our diverse range of boats, and ensure that the facility accommodates the long-term users of the marina, (racing programs, dragon boats, disabled sailing, etc.) The design should allow for sailboats sailing into and out of the marina; Dragon boats; and possibly larger vessels at the end of the docks. The focus of the facilities should be on smaller boats.

Key features should include:

- An effective breakwater system
- Non-slip decking without holes, nails and other hazards
- Power and water for tenants
- Direct access from parking areas, including handicap accessibility
- Dock carts and storage
- Dry storage on floats and 24–26 foot slips to support the current racing programs with room for expansion
- Side-tie moorage for dragon boats
- Small boat launching ramp suitable for launching dollies (versus trailers), potentially available for the general public
- Security for tenants
- Restrooms for tenants
- Public access to a dock or breakwater
- Short-term daytime tie-ups

Desirable features may include:

- Shoreside meeting/multipurpose space
Watercraft rentals
- Boatwash facilities – connection to sanitary sewer
- Shower facilities for tenants
- Public viewpoints
- Pump-out station

Design considerations:

- Sample slip configurations

- Decrease shadow to the underwater environment
- Improved bathroom facilities at north end (shower)
- Paired slips with wider finger piers
- Emergency ladders at each pair of slips
- Low level dock lighting to minimize glare
- Shallower ramp angles
- Bus access
- Clear views into and across the marina from the Boulevard, with seating areas
- A design/build contract could be desirable for this project
- Explore the possibility of separating sailboats and powerboats
- Recognize the Olmstead legacy of the adjacent Lake Washington Boulevard and Leschi Park
- Integrate the design with the surrounding Leschi community
- Apply green design and construction practices to all aspects of the project
- Include community considerations in the design and operation of the facility

It is assumed that the moorage facilities will continue to cater to both sailboats and powerboats, in order to meet customer demand and to achieve financial stability. In accommodating both types of users, it may be preferable to identify certain sections of the marina that are more appropriate for powerboats.

The facilities need to be safe and attractive but should not be fancy in order to safeguard affordability. Leschi should not be a country club; it is a community resource. Water access for the general public, including accessibility to walk parts of the docks, could be desirable.

2. **Achieve financial sustainability through a coherent, long-term operational plan, committed City management and common-sense practices.**

The City's current \$4 million budget will provide a critical jump-start for capital improvements to South Leschi but those funds should explicitly fit into a broader long-term development plan. It would be misguided—and a lost opportunity—to rebuild the breakwater, dock structures or any other moorage features without knowing what comes next.

The City should complete a business plan in order to achieve plausible operational objectives. Potential elements of the plan include:

- Reinvest rents into the property versus the City's and/or Park's general fund
- Bring rents closer to market rates
- Differentiate seasonal, annual and live-aboard rates
- Different rates for Seattle residents and non-residents
- Partnership opportunities with mission-driven non-profit organizations and users who wish to use the facility "in bulk" over the long-term
- Effectively marketing recreational opportunities available through the marina

Other revenue generating activities to consider include shore-side facilities such as a meeting room, kayak leasing or similar. Grants may be available for a pump-out station.

3. Model governance and operations after the City's successful golf program.

Marinas and golf courses have different operational needs but the basic idea of identifying a third party to operate the moorage while the City remains the lead on capital improvements is sound. This is the current model at Leschi but it has not worked because there has not been hands-on oversight or accountability such as there is for the City's golf program; major maintenance has not been provided by the City or the operator; and revenues generated by tenant rent have not been reinvested in the facility.

The City should issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a marina operator for a new contractual agreement.

Key operational requirements should include:

- A tight, well-articulated and detailed contract between the City and chosen operator
- Good financial and operational records; operating guidelines and monthly reports

- Leadership at Parks and oversight of the contract (the manager of golf programs for the city has already been identified for this role with the marinas—which is a huge, positive step forward)

Consideration should be given to one entity providing day-to-day operations at both Leschi and Lakewood moorages. Notwithstanding the fact that there are different short-term needs, over the long-term this could provide economies of scale, coordinated marketing and the feasibility of a higher level of staff provided by the operator due to potentially greater earnings.

An ongoing tenant/community advisory team could help to facilitate communication between the Moorage Manager, tenants and the community. Critical management activities including selection of operating concessionaire, capital improvements, standards of maintenance and lease rates should be communicated through the advisory team.

4. Immediately address management and maintenance shortcomings at the facility.

It will likely take some time to issue the RFQ, select a concessionaire, and then negotiate a contract. In the meantime, conditions at the marina continue to deteriorate, maintenance is being deferred, and the facility is being operated in an unsafe, substandard manner. To address this situation, Parks should immediately increase its oversight of the facility, identify a near term list of critical repairs and essential maintenance practices, and then ensure that those repairs are made and practices are adhered to. Improving operations in the short term will enable the longer term vision and recommendations presented in this document to be implemented at least cost.

Timeline

May 2014	PAT recommendations to Parks Superintendent
Summer 2014	Potential new RFQ issued
By December 31, 2014	City selects concessionaire and negotiates contract. City Council approves the Management Agreement with selected concessionaire.

May 31, 2014	Current concessionaire month-to-month lease agreement ends (or ends sooner if a new agreement is reached as a result of an RFP process)
No later than August 1, 2014	Interim Progress Report due to City Council
No later than December 1, 2014	Final Report due to City Council
2014-2015	Capital improvements decided; JARPA and City permits issued

Appendix

A. Leschi Construction Costs

The \$4 million authorized for capital improvements at Leschi will be an important springboard but overall construction costs have been estimated by Reid Middleton to in the range of \$11 million.

POSSIBLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS Apr-14

Marina Location

	Float Replacement Options:	Timber/Tub Float	Concrete Modular	Concrete Monolithic	In-Kind Replacement
North Leschi					
	Floats	\$ 2,141,000.00	\$ 2,676,000.00	\$ 3,022,000.00	
	Piers (fixed)				\$ 1,838,000.00
South Leschi					
	Floats	\$ 3,989,000.00	\$ 4,661,000.00	\$ 4,811,000.00	

South Leschi Break Water Options:

	Concrete /w Util (e-w)	Concrete /w Util (n-s)	Fixed Sheet-Pile (e-w)	Fixed Sheet-Pile (n-s)
	\$ 1,580,000.00	\$ 2,560,000.00	\$ 490,000.00	\$ 800,000.00
Credit for Reduced e-w float width				
(Timber/Tub Float)	(\$392,000)			
(Concrete Option)	(\$361,000)			

North and South Leschi Example:

Timber/Tub Float Replacement Option, fixed Piers, Floating Concrete Breakwaters (n-s and e-w)	\$11,716,000
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Leschi moorages (north and south combined) generated \$557,000 in 2013 and \$584,000 in 2012. These revenues could potentially increase if an effort is made to reduce vacancies through year-round (versus seasonal) rates and if rates are brought closer to market. In addition, about 18% of the wet slips have been unusable because they are so dilapidated but they will be able to generate revenue once the marina is updated.

The PAT believes that issuing bonds could be an effective way to secure a portion of the needed capital coupled with better management and operational changes such as reinvesting a portion of rent paid back into facility maintenance versus going to the City's general fund. Additional capital investment by the City may also be needed.

The PAT believes it is important for the City to retain ownership of the moorage assets. In principle, the PAT would not be opposed to third party funding and management of capital improvement but 1) it is unlikely a private partner would finance capital improvements for assets owned by the City, and 2) even if such a funder were found it would need operational and economic latitude to a degree that may not align with goals important to the City and tenants.

B. Members of the Leschi Moorages Public Advisory Committee

- David Andrew, Footloose Sailing Association
- John Barber, former Parks Board Commissioner, Leschi Community Council
- Marc Daudon, Corinthian Yacht Club--Thistle Sailing Fleet
- Marc Frazer
- Paul Jackson
- Stevan Johnson, , Corinthian Yacht Club
- Ned Porges
- Rick Renaud, Club Sake Dragon Boat Club
- Kary Schneider
- Remmert Wolters, Corinthian Yacht Club

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